

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel Claims 1-5 and 18-22, amend Claims 6-10, 13 and 17, and add Claim 37, as follows:

1-5. (Cancelled).

6. (Currently Amended). The apparatus of claim 2 37, wherein the retainer slides from the first position to the second position.

7. (Currently Amended). The apparatus of claim 3 37, wherein the engaging surface is a notch.

8. (Currently Amended). The apparatus of claim 2 37, wherein the retainer is a latch.

9. (Currently Amended). The apparatus of claim 2 37, wherein the retainer is a pin.

10. (Currently Amended). The apparatus of claim 4 37, wherein the apparatus further comprises:

a hammer housed within the receiver, the hammer being capable of moving from a ready position to a firing position when the grip and the receiver are in the adjacent position;

a safety retainer associated with the receiver; and

a safety projection associated with the grip, the safety retainer and safety projection engaging one another when the hammer is in the ready position;

whereby engaging the safety retainer and safety projection maintains the grip and the receiver in the fixed relationship, regardless of whether the projection and the retainer are engaged.

11. (Original). The apparatus of claim 10, wherein the apparatus further comprises a sear mounted on the grip, wherein the safety projection is attached to the sear, the sear being moveable from a third position, in which the safety projection disengages the safety retainer, to a fourth position, in which the safety projection engages the safety retainer; and wherein the hammer is urged from the ready position to the firing position such that when the hammer is the ready position, the sear engages the hammer and the hammer urges the sear from the third position to the fourth position to thereby engage the safety projection and the safety retainer.

12. (Original). The apparatus of claim 11, wherein, when the grip and the receiver are in the open position, the hammer may be inserted into the receiver without contacting the sear.

13. (Currently Amended). The apparatus of claim 2 37, wherein the apparatus further comprises:

a hammer housed within the receiver, the hammer being capable of moving from a ready position to a firing position when the grip and the receiver are in the adjacent position;

a safety member in a fifth position for engaging the retainer when the hammer is in the ready position and thereby preventing the retainer from disengaging the projection.

14. (Original). The apparatus of claim 13, wherein, when the hammer is not in the ready position and when the retainer is not in the first position, the retainer urges the safety member into a sixth position whereby the safety member blocks the hammer from moving into the ready position.

15. (Original). The apparatus of claim 14, wherein the safety member has a first end in contact with the retainer and a second end, the second end having a

hammer-engaging surface and a hammer-blocking surface, and wherein, when the retainer is moved from the first position, the retainer urges the safety member into the sixth position.

16. (Original). The apparatus of claim 15, wherein, when the hammer is in the ready position, the hammer is adjacent the hammer-engaging surface, thereby preventing the safety member from moving into the sixth position and preventing the retainer from moving into the second position.

17. (Currently Amended). The apparatus of claim 15, wherein, when the hammer is not in the ready position, and the retainer is not in the first position, the retainer urges the safety member into the sixth position and the hammer-blocking surface prevents the hammer from moving into the ready position.

~~An apparatus for firing a paintball projectile, the apparatus comprising:~~
~~a grip;~~
~~a firing assembly comprising a rear housing, a hammer, and a firing bolt;~~
~~a receiver for housing the firing assembly;~~
~~a projection on one of either of the firing assembly or the grip; and~~
~~a receptacle on the other of either the firing assembly or the grip, the~~
~~receptacle cooperating to selectively engage the projection, thereby retaining the firing~~
~~assembly in the receiver.~~

18-22. (Cancelled).

23-36. (Previously Withdrawn).

37. (New). An apparatus for firing a paintball projectile, the apparatus comprising:

a grip;

a receiver hingedly attached to the grip, enabling the grip and the receiver to move from an adjacent position to an open position;

a projection on one of either the grip or the receiver; and

a retainer fixedly attached to the other of either the grip or the receiver, the projection and the retainer cooperating to selectively engage each other, thereby retaining the grip and the receiver in a fixed relationship;

wherein the projection is adapted to receive the retainer, the retainer is capable of moving from a first position to a second position, the retainer engaging with the projection in the first position and the retainer disengaging with the projection in the second position; and

wherein the projection includes an engaging surface adapted to mate with the retainer;

whereby the retainer is positioned to mate with the engaging surface in the first position and to disengage the engaging surface when rotated into the second position.